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DEPARTMENT FOR IO AND AF/C

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [GB](#)
SUBJECT: GABON: HIGH-LEVEL NORTH KOREAN VISIT; REQUEST FOR
SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL UN OFFICE

Classified By: Ambassador Eunice S. Reddick for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)
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¶1. (SBU) Gabonese Foreign Minister Paul Toungui officially informed the Ambassador on February 8 that a high-level North Korean delegation led by Kim Yong Nam will visit Libreville during a tour of African countries at the end of February. Kim Yong Nam is the President of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly. Toungui also informed ambassadors representing other Permanent members of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) separately. The Gabonese wanted to share information with the U.S. about the upcoming North Korean visit. The Ambassador thanked the Foreign Minister for alerting the U.S. and said she would reach out to Washington and New York for more information on the current state of play on North Korean issues.

¶2. (C) Toungui expressed appreciation for the strong and open relationship between Gabon and the United States. He described President Bongo Ondimba's meeting with Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson in Addis Ababa on February 1 as "excellent" and a good introduction for Bongo. The Ambassador told Toungui that U.S.-Gabonese consultations in Washington on January 29 regarding United Nations Security Council issues were very productive.

¶3. (SBU) Gabon also (d was) requested U.S. assistance with the U.N. Department of Political Affairs on the issue of the location of a regional office in Central Africa. Gabon is one of three countries (Gabon, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea) being considered. Gabon is high on the list because it is the headquarters of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEC) and its infrastructure. A technical team inspected the proposed building and property that the Gabonese Government will donate for the office and residence of the special representative over the past week. The police-protected site is on the large Cite de la Democratie compound that also houses a conference center, offices and residences for Gabonese officials and diplomats. Toungui said that the U.N. first approached Gabon in December and U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon also discussed the issue with Bongo on the margins of the African Union summit. Toungui said that the "large countries" have a say at the U.N. Political Affairs office and requested U.S. support for the regional office to be located in Libreville. Ambassador (d Reddick) promised to follow up with our U.N. Mission in New York and Washington.

¶4. (C) Comment: Gabonese officials believe (d that) they have been included on the North Korean delegation's tour because of Gabon's non-permanent seat on the UNSC. Post views this as an opportunity to influence Gabon's decision-making and would greatly appreciate current information on the status of non-proliferation and human rights issues on North Korea. We also would like to be able

to confirm if U.S. has a role to play or a position regarding
the location of the U.N. regional office.
REDDICK